other aircraft to safeguard the interest of our country. However, the exact number of such aircraft can not be divulged in the interest of national security. The MiG fleet was inducted in Indian Air Force from the year 1964 to 1986.

(b) No, Sir. In fact, there has been a definite decline in the number of MiG aircraft accidents in the recent past.

(c) Modernization and upgradation of IAF fleet is a continuous process.

(d) A total number of 157 pilots and 35 civilians were killed, in the MiG aircraft accidents since 1971, while IAF suffered a loss of Rs. 17,68,00,11,086/-.

Project to manufacture Arjun Tank

†321. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the project to manufacture Arjun Tank has not been able to achieve its proposed target;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Combat Vehicle Research and Development Institute, Avadi has manufactured only four Arjun Tanks instead of 125; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Main Battle Tank Arjun has been successfully developed by DRDO and it is under production at Heavy Vehicle Factory (HVF) Avadi—a unit of Ordnance Factory Board.

(c) and (d) The Arjun Tank has been designed and developed by Combat Vehicles Research & Development Establishment Avadi, **a** laboratory of DRDO. The Army placed an indent in March 2000 for manufacture of 124 tanks on HVF, Avadi. The production schedule has been drawn. There has been initial delay in supply of the first lot to the Army due to a number of changes suggested by the Army in the course of trials. The changes have been incorporated and the first lot of 5 tanks is ready for delivery to Army.

New ensigns, flags and pendants for the Indian Navy

322. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Navy propose to adorn its ships, submarines and establishments with new ensigns, flags and pendants; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The new naval ensign, distinguishing flags and pendants have been introduced from 25th April, 2004. The reason for the change was that the earlier flags had a blue and white colour combination which were not clearly visible from a distance, especially at sea.

Sugar mills lying closed

†323. SHRI ABU ASIMAZMI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar mills at Gauri Bazar, Padrauna and Kathkuiyan under Kanpur Sugar Works Ltd. and Ganesh Sugar Mill at Anand Nagar are lying closed for the last many years;

(b) if so, the initiatives being taken by the Ministry regarding payments of salaries to employees working in the said mills and payments of outstanding sugarcane prices to farmers;

(c) whether Government are considering any scheme of running these mills after their renovation; and

(d) if not, initiatives being taken by Government to sell out these mills to private parties?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The shares of British India Corporation Ltd. (BIC) in Cawnpore Sugar Works Ltd. (CSWL) were transferred in favour of Gangotri Enterprises Ltd. (GEL) in January 1999 on the directions of BIFR.

Ganesh Sugar Mill is a unit of Swadeshi Mining & Mfg. Co. Ltd. (SMMC). SMMC is under liquidation orders of Allahabad High Court on the recommendations of BIFR. Therefore, the sugarcane dues/workers' dues will be liquidated by the Official Liquidator as per the provisions of the Companies Act.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.